Library of Congress

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Vol. 52, No. 10 Published Biweekly May 17, 1993

The Library's '100 Millionth Item'

Also: Dr. Billington Hails Public Libraries

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JAMES H. BILLINGTON
Librarian of Congress

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On the Cover: Dr. Billington (from left), Madison Council Chairman John Kluge and Rep. Vic Fazio (D–Calif.) unveil a watercolor that is representative of the Library's 100 millionth acquisition. The work is by John Rubens Smith. The ceremony was held in the Jefferson Building's Great Hall on April 13, the 250th birthday of Thomas Jefferson. *Photo by Jim Higgins*

Cover Story: A collection of 745 works by John Rubens Smith, an influential American artist during the first half of the 19th century, comprises the "100 millionth item" in the Library's collections. 202

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The *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* is issued biweekly except in August (no issues published) and in December (one issue published) by the Public Affairs Office of the Library of Congress and distributed free of charge to publicly supported libraries and research institutions, academic libraries, learned societies and allied organizations in the United States.

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Remote Access to Library Files Available over Internet

Computerized access to the vast resources of the world's largest library has improved dramatically. For the first time, more than 26 million Library of Congress records in 35 different files are available to the general public on the Internet.

Previously, such access has been available only to researchers at the Library, Library staff, congressional offices and selected institutions and agencies involved in cooperative programs with the Library of Congress.

In testimony before Congress on April 21, Librarian of Congress James H. Billington said, "We believe the future holds the potential for the Library to play a significant role in enriching and upgrading local institutions of learning and research so that even those Americans far from great universities and the more affluent schools and libraries can still have access to the best of the nation's heritage and the latest up-to-date information."

The Internet is a nonprofit collection of computer networks that links an estimated 20 million computer users in more than 100 countries. The Library of Congress requires no fee to search its files.

The host address for telnet access to the Library of Congress Information System (LOCIS) is *locis.loc.gov* (*140.147.254.3*) The Library supports both 3270 and line mode for access to its files.

LOCIS includes more than 15 million catalog records for books, microforms, music, audiovisuals, manuscripts, microcomputer software, serials, maps, name and subject references and in-process items. LOCIS also contains citations to federal legislation (1973–), copyright registrations and legal documents (1978–), braille and recorded materials for those unable to read print, selected foreign legislation (1976–) and foreign legal references (1989–) and a listing of 13,000 organizations that provide information, arranged by subject.

Access to more than 26 million Library records is available over the Internet. *Photo by Lucy D. Suddreth*

Except for national holidays, LOCIS will be available for searching at the following times (Eastern time): Monday–Friday 6:30 a.m.–9:30 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m.–5 p.m.

Regional midlevel computer networks that participate in the Internet in the United States communicate over dedicated high-speed data lines managed, in part, by the National Science Foundation. Access to the Internet is provided through a variety of sources unrelated to the Library of Congress. These sources include computer centers in academic, business and government organizations, library networks, commercial vendors and gateways, local entrepreneurs, electronic bulletin boards and National Science Foundation regional networks.

Although the Library of Congress charges no fees for access to its files, many Internet access providers do charge fees to connect to Internet.

Individuals and organizations that do not already have access to the Internet should contact their local library for further information or call the InterNIC Information Services Referral Desk at (800) 444-4345, Monday through Friday 5 a.m.–7 p.m. (Pacific time), which can send a list of Internet access providers.

Complete instructions for searching LOCIS and for obtaining the LOCIS Quick Search Guide and LOCIS Reference Manual will be available on the initial screens presented to users upon connecting to LOCIS.

The availability of selected Library of Congress computer files over the Internet is a major step toward the creation of an electronic "library without walls" as outlined in the Library's strategic plan for the year 2000, which was delivered to Congress last year.

Librarian Testifies on Hill for National Library Week:

Dr. Billington Stresses Role of Public Libraries

The new electronic age makes the nation's 15,000 public libraries "more, rather than less, important to the progress of the United States in the 21st century," Dr. Billington told Congress during National Library Week, April 18–24.

The Librarian testified April 21 before the Joint Committee on the Library, chaired by Rep. Charlie Rose (D-N.C.). Like other witnesses, including state and local librarians and Marilyn Miller, president of the American Library Association, he discussed the "state of our nation's libraries."

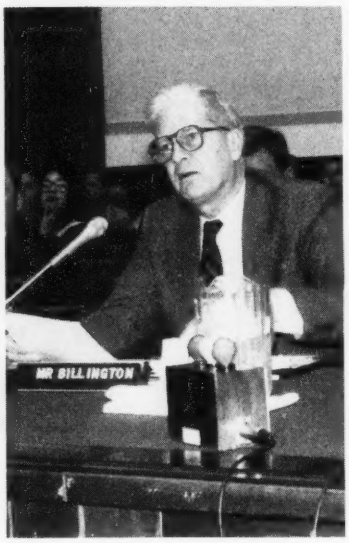
Present were Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Reps. Martin Frost (D-Texas), Thomas J. Manton (D-N.Y.) and Pat Roberts (R-Kan.).

Dr. Billington noted that some techno-pundits have argued that the community library and even the book are doomed by electronics to obsolescence. Not so, he said, adding that electronic on-line information "will vastly supplement, not destroy, the book."

Dr. Billington's testimony follows:

There are many kinds of libraries in the United States today, and, directly or indirectly, the Library of Congress assists all of them. We share the same ideals, the same preoccupations with high-quality service, the same vision of democracy based on the increased literacy and knowledge of the citizenry. Of the many descriptions the Library of Congress has been given in its 193-year history, we especially prize the terms "Congress's Library," "The Nation's Library" and "The Library of Last Resort."

We are the nation's library because Congress in its wisdom has shared its library with the American people. Our core free services for the American people are made possible by congressional appropriations and include organizing, cataloging and preserving a universal collection of knowledge, making interlibrary loans, distributing reading material and equipment to the blind and physically handicapped and providing open access to our reading rooms, reference services, data bases and collections. Our cataloging alone saves America's libraries at least $360 million a year—a larger sum than the Library of Congress's annual appropriation from Congress.



"We are in serious danger of eroding a unique legacy laboriously created by our forebears," Dr. Billington told a congressional panel April 21. *Photo by Yusef El-Amin*

We are the library of last resort because of the size and range both of our collections and of our staff. All but one of the state library agencies, for example, are partners with us in the state referral program, in which we supply answers to reference questions that individual states lack the resources to handle. We answered 955,000 inquiries by telephone and letter from all over the country last year. In the case of interlibrary loans, the Library of Congress answered last year almost 40,000 requests that came in from every state in the union.

Today, Mr. Chairman, I want to pay tribute to the libraries of first resort—those which directly serve citizens in local communities. These are the 15,169 local public libraries, in towns as small as Peterboro, N.H., site of the oldest tax-supported public library, and in big cities like New York, where 52 branch libraries in the five boroughs serve people of all creeds and ethnic backgrounds. The local public library remains one of American society's key institutions. It both links us with the past and opens up the future—especially to the young and the newly arrived.

Yet Americans have been less than extravagant in their financial support of libraries. The sad irony is that support for libraries has generally been decreasing at the very time they are beginning to provide a whole array of new services—ranging from computer networking to literacy classes to after-school programs for latchkey children.

Roughly half of all adults and 66 percent of all Americans, by one estimate, visited a library last year. Meanwhile, as we know from our own experience at the Library of Congress, the cost of providing services has risen, notably the costs of books, periodicals and data bases. At a time when the amount of information available doubles every five years, most libraries are not able to acquire even as much now as they were a few years ago. Most American libraries are simply not able to keep up.

In cities struck by economic recession, the public library has been among the hardest hit of all local institutions. One extreme case noted

(Cont. on p. 210)

Cultural Controversy:

Writer Questions Basis of Classical Scholarship

"Multiculturalism" may be *the* politically correct jargon in the 1990s, but, according to Martin Bernal, it's long overdue—by about 150 years or so. In fact, it could even be applied as far back as the second millennium B.C.

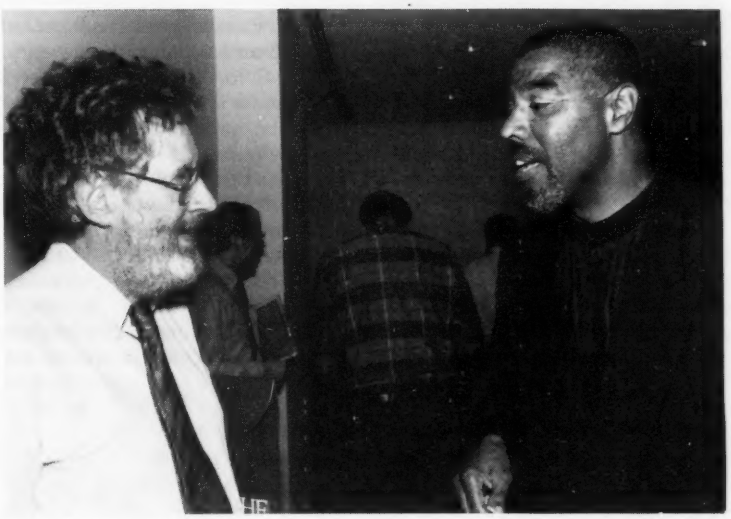
Mr. Bernal, a professor of government at Cornell University, is the author of *Black Athena,* a controversial work-in-progress (the second of four volumes was recently published) that questions the basic tenets of Western classical scholarship.

The Library of Congress Professional Association sponsored Mr. Bernal's April 15 visit, during which he discussed his theories and fielded a variety of questions from a large LC crowd in the West Dining Room.

"I place the study of Greek civilization under two headings. The 'ancient' model describes the way many Greeks viewed their history; it recognizes Egyptian and Phoenician influences. The second is the Aryan model, whose proponents teach that an Indo-European invasion of the native Aegean population shaped Greek culture, bringing in a masculine dynamism from the north," Mr. Bernal explained.

The British-born author believes that 19th century Western scholars' religious, cultural and racial views caused them to reinterpret Greek history. He believes that racial bias led them to dismiss evidence that the Egyptians, whom he describes as "fundamentally African," and the Phoenicians, who were Semitic, conquered and colonized Greece in the second millennium B.C.

"We see traces of Egyptian influence in the Greeks' irrigation schemes, in the pyramid at Thebes and the palace system at Crete; all of this at about 2,700 B.C., around the time these things were appearing in Egypt," he argued.



Martin Bernal (left) discusses his theories with an audience member. *Photo by Jim Higgins*

According to Mr. Bernal, until the 1840s historians acknowledged Egyptian and Phoenician influences on Greek civilization. But afterward, he contends, a variety of factors, including the growing slave trade, caused many to rewrite history.

"Something changed with the advent of slavery and the caste system it introduced," he insisted. "How do you justify acting inhumanely to people? By dehumanizing them. Egypt was inconveniently part of the African continent. Some rewrote history by changing Egyptians into whites; others viewed them as West Africans but called them uncivilized. Since only the Europeans could be considered civilized, they had to dismiss the Greeks' claims of prior Egyptian influence."

However, when asked whether the ancient Egyptians were black, he disagreed, siding with Egyptologists who claim that they were of mixed race.

Another listener questioned Mr. Bernal's motives for raising the culture-ownership issue in the first place, citing its potential use as a politically divisive tool that could be used to accuse rather than enlighten.

"I'm concerned about Eurocentrism," he responded. "As for politics, classical studies has always been political. I'm not arguing that any one culture be given all of the credit; there has been a mixture and contrast of cultures contributing to man's history. I want to shoot down the notion that all good things come only from Greece and were transmitted solely by Europeans. We need to realize that there are various sources of good and many influences in our culture."

—*Barbara Bryant*

U.N. Charts a Changing Course in a New World:
Italian Minister Addresses LC Audience

On April 7, Guido Lenzi, minister of Italy's permanent mission to the United Nations, visited the Library to discuss "The New Role of the U.N. in Environmental, Economic and Social Development," sponsored by LC's European Division.

Throughout his address, Mr. Lenzi, who assumed his current position in 1989, downplayed the United Nations' increasing importance as peacekeeper in such strife-torn countries as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia. He stressed that worldwide economic and social stability is a prerequisite to ensuring international security.

"The blue helmets [worn by U.N. peacekeeping forces] are an obvious manifestation of the United Nations' rebirth; they are the most glitzy part," Mr. Lenzi said.

"Revolutions occur when people are hungry. Many of the blue helmets are there strictly as a stopgap solution. They are not *the* solution to the problem. . . . The U.N. should not be seen as a military organization enforcing the policy of a limited number of organizations that want things to work like clockwork."

Mr. Lenzi emphasized that the United Nations' mandate goes much deeper than peacemaking and that its efforts should begin sooner. "Part of our task is to address the *cause* of events," he said, referring to the 1945 conference in San Francisco, where the U.N. charter was drafted.

"The U.N. set itself to improve the fate of humanity, foster cooperation and prevent the causes of conflict," he explained. "We see that the causes of instability are economic and social. These factors led to the recent changes in Eastern Europe and were also the [basis] for the recent summit in Vancouver, where President Clinton and President Yeltsin discussed food, reconstruction and prosperity.

"The Cold War locked the world into sterile stability, but the fundamental problems of humanity were not solved. When the walls fell, it had the opposite effect from what was expected. Instead of unifying countries, the changes caused a swing of the pendulum toward the affirmation of national particularity. . . . As a result, countries emerging from communist domination didn't cooperate more but are more willing to rely on multilateral instruments of the U.N. to solve their problems."

Mr. Lenzi conceded that in the past the United Nations has not been as aggressive as many of its members had hoped. "The U.N. has rightly been accused of being little more than a debating society, of being irrelevant," he said. "But we need debate to achieve consensus and gain information about issues. . . . Rich nations have many connections and networks in which to communicate, but many poor countries have only the U.N. as a loudspeaker."

Guido Lenzi: "The U.N. should not be seen as a military organization enforcing the policy of a limited number of organizations that want things to work like clockwork." *Photo by Yusef El-Amin*

Funding shortfalls also hamper U.N. efforts, Mr. Lenzi said, a problem he blames on the organization's members. He cited a report by an independent advisory group to the United Nations that called for greater contributions from Security Council member-countries for specific U.N. initiatives, such as peacekeeping missions. "The amount of funding for the U.N.'s peacekeeping missions costs as much as two Stealth bombers, or .2 percent of the world's military budgets combined," he said. "We're not talking about a lot of money."

As for the future, Mr. Lenzi voiced optimism tempered by some anxiety. "Many problems are becoming global in scope": peacekeeping missions, environmental issues, poverty, refugees, trade imbalances, AIDS. "These issues cannot be addressed by one country alone, only by international organizations such as the U.N.

"The U.S. administration is picking up on many of these challenges as they come up and is attributing increasing authority to the U.N.," he continued. "However, there is a danger that the U.N.'s role is changing and not for the better. In the future, the organization may find itself performing a residual function not covered by other aid organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, etc. We may be perceived as a charitable hospital for the least fortunate countries,

concentrating only on spoon-feeding the 'have-not' countries while only the 'have' countries serve as the U.N.'s permanent members. We have to avoid that," he warned. "It will lead to a break in the compact of the U.N."

Despite these forebodings, Mr. Lenzi also celebrated the organization's new approach to aiding countries. "The U.N. hopes to help countries using strategies that are developed by the countries themselves," he explained. "The assistance will be supervised but not imposed by the U.N.; however, the recipients will be expected to work for the good of their own people. Sometimes, we have to step in and substitute for a failed government, but the assistance must be specifically targeted, planned and impartial. . . . We must be 'surgical'—do what we must and get out—followed by the establishment of normal relationships between nations.

"Sometimes we have to step in for a failed government, but the assistance must be specifically targeted, planned and impartial. We must be 'surgical'—do what we must and get out—followed by the establishment of normal relationships between nations."

Guido Lenzi,
Italian Minister to U.N.

"This is a very delicate matter," he stressed, "because nonaligned Third World countries are on their guard against the imposition of extraneous foreign values. China often abstains from voting in the Security Council for this reason. . . . Internal interference may be resented."

In closing, Mr. Lenzi underscored that "the U.N. can't do it all—or alone."

—*Barbara Bryant*

'Library of Congress Corner' Unveiled

A versatile new means of getting the "champagne out of the bottle"—making the riches of the Library of Congress as widely accessible as possible—was officially launched at the Library on April 19 during National Library Week.

The Library of Congress Corner, a joint project of the Social Issues Resources Series (SIRS) and the Library's Publishing Office, presents themed displays based on treasures of the Library of Congress—historic documents, photographs, maps, music manuscripts, posters, prints, rare books—selected and annotated by the Library staff.

Aimed at libraries, schools and other public and cultural institutions, the LC Corner was conceived as an innovatively "low-tech" yet effective means by which items from the Library's collections could inform, inspire and stimulate fresh thought. SIRS is a 20-year publisher of educational reference materials based in Boca Raton, Fla.

Prominent at the April 19 reception was the premier LC Corner display, "Thomas Jefferson's Legacy," which reveals in text and images the multifaceted Jefferson: author of the Declaration of Independence, governor, diplomat, scientist, musician, architect, farmer, U.S. president, mapmaker, linguist—and inspirational founder of the Library of Congress.

Subscribers to the Library of Congress Corner series receive four different displays each year, on a quarterly basis, for a yearly subscription rate of $600. (The compact, portable display stand is a separate, one-time purchase.) Each display comprises 16 panel units, with eight showing per side. Subjects for upcoming displays include:

John Y. Cole, Director, Center for the Book, stands in front of the first Library of Congress Corner display with Eleanor Goldstein, publisher, Social Issues Resources Series (SIRS), and Elliot Goldstein, president of SIRS. *Photo by Yusef El-Amin*

☐ "American Folklife: A Commonwealth of Cultures," a photographic celebration of the peoples and heritages that are woven together in the cultural tapestry that is the United States.

☐ "An Ongoing Voyage," an examination of the continuing impact of Columbus's 1492 landfall in the West Indies.

For further information, contact SIRS at P.O. Box 2348, Boca Raton, FL 33427, (800) 232-SIRS.

News from the Center for the Book:
Missouri and North Dakota State Centers Established

☐ **"Books Change Lives."** The Center for the Book's 1993–94 national reading promotion theme was emphasized by John Y. Cole, the center's director, in his keynote address on April 29 in Nashville at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Library Association; on April 21 in a National Library Week talk at the Department of State Library; on April 3, in Oxford, Miss., in a presentation at the first Oxford Conference for the Book, sponsored by the University of Mississippi's Institute for the Study of Southern Culture; and on March 20, in Memphis, in his talk at the Time To Read National Conference, sponsored by Time Warner Inc.

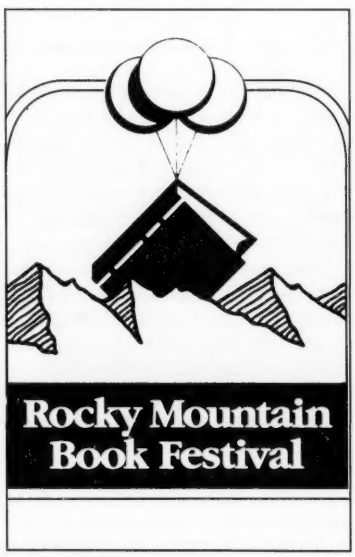
☐ **Reading Promotion Partnership Program.** The number of national organizational partners has increased to 124. Recent additions include the American Indian Library Association, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (U.S. Department of Justice), the National Catholic Educational Association and the National Newspaper Association. National partners participate in the Library's reading promotion campaign by using the theme ("Books Change Lives" in 1993–94), publicizing campaign projects or by making a financial or in-kind contribution.

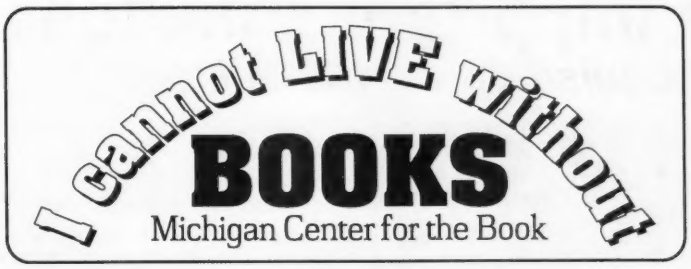
☐ **Colorado.** The Colorado Center for the Book and *The Denver Post* will sponsor the Rocky Mountain Book Festival, "a celebration of the Rocky Mountain Book Community" in Denver on Oct. 1–2, 1993, in Currigan Exhibition Hall. For information, write or call the Colorado Center for the Book, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Suite 309, Denver, CO 80203, (303) 866–6901.

☐ **Connecticut.** From February through April, the Connecticut Center for the Book and the Southern Connecticut Library Council presented "The Writing Life," a series of nine programs presented by eight authors in cities and towns throughout Connecticut. Each program was tailored for a different audience, ranging from third grade classes to seniors. For information, write the Southern Connecticut Library Council, 2405 Whitney Ave., Suite 3, Hamden, CT 06518–3235.

☐ **Florida.** The Florida Center for the Book, located at the Broward County Library, is one of six organizations selected to host "Thomas Jefferson at 250: The Legacy of an American Genius," a national lecture tour and public program series sponsored by Monticello and the Library of Congress and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The other host institutions are the American Antiquarian

Ninth-grader Noelle Arton (center) of Danville, Calif., winner of *READ Magazine's* "Books Change Lives" essay contest, visited the Library's Center for the Book on April 22; she met John Cole (left), the center's director, as did her mother, Charlotte. More than 1,000 students submitted essays in this year's competition. *For information, write READ, 245 Long Hill Road, Middletown, CT, 06457. Photo by Ysef El-Amin*





Society, Humanities West of San Francisco, the Historic New Orleans Collection, the Missouri Historical Society and the Newberry Library. The series of 10 programs presented by the Florida center will conclude on Sept. 30 with a talk by Garry Wills on "The Declaration of Independence."

☐ **Minnesota.** The Minnesota Book Awards for 1992, sponsored by the Minnesota Center for the Book, were presented on April 23 in a ceremony at the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul. Now in its fifth year, the awards program recognizes Minnesota authors, illustrators and editors for their exemplary books.

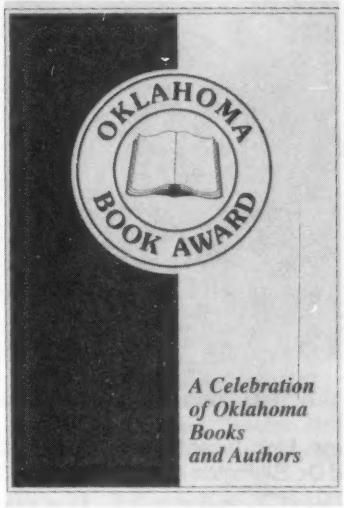
For information, write the Minnesota Book Awards, Library Development & Services, 440 Capitol Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101-2233.

☐ **Missouri.** The Center for the Book has approved the application of the Missouri State Library to serve as the host institution for a new Missouri Center for the Book. Libraries and other organizations throughout the state will be cooperative partners.

For information, write or call Madeline Matson, Missouri State Library, P.O. Box 387, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0387, (314) 751-3615.

☐ **North Dakota.** The Center for the Book has approved the application of the North Dakota State Library to serve as the host institution for a new North Dakota Center for the Book. Libraries and other organizations throughout the state will be cooperative partners.

For information, write or call Nancy Maxwell, North Dakota State Library, 604 E. Boulevard, Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0800, (701) 224-2040.

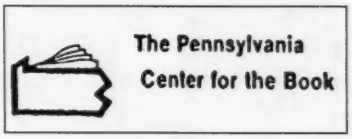


Michigan used this well-known quote of Thomas Jefferson during National Library Week; Oklahoma recently celebrated the state's writers.

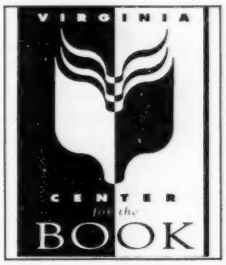
☐ **Oklahoma.** The fourth annual Oklahoma Book Awards, sponsored by the Oklahoma Center for the Book, were presented during a dinner and ceremony at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City on March 6. Seven winners were announced. The nonfiction award was shared by former Oklahoma governor Henry Bellmon and his daughter Pat for *The Life and Times of Henry Bellmon*, and Librarian of Congress Emeritus Daniel J. Boorstin, a native of Tulsa, for his book *The Creators*.

For information, write or call the Oklahoma Center for the Book, 200 N.E. 18th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73105, (405) 521-2502.

☐ **Pennsylvania.** Gov. Bob Casey designated May as "Books Change Lives" month in Pennsylvania. During National Library Week, the Pennsylvania Center for the Book, Pizza Hut and Borders Book Shops sponsored a "Books Change Lives" essay and poetry contest for 11th and 12th grade students in Philadelphia, Lancaster and Pittsburgh.

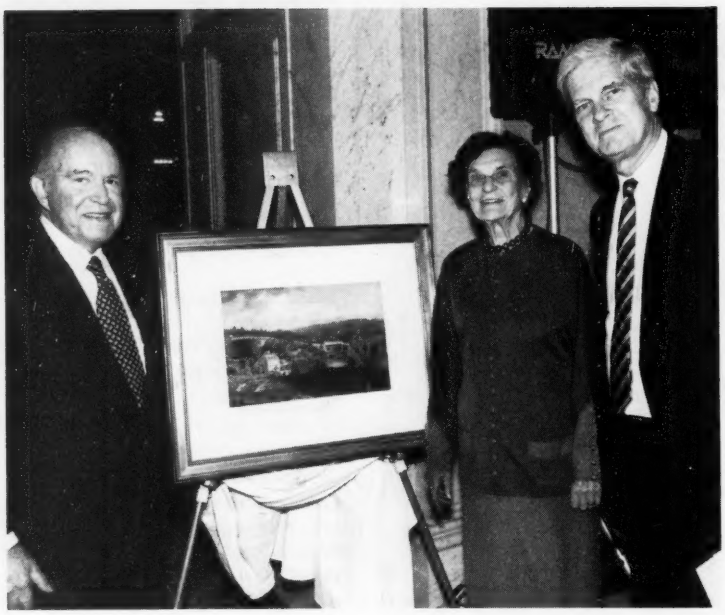


☐ **Virginia.** On April 4 in Richmond, the Virginia Center for the Book hosted the 24th annual May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture. The speaker was the award-winning author Virginia Hamilton. The Arbuthnot Honor Lecture is administered by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association.



☐ **Kansas.** Through its programs, its book collecting, and the development of a Kansas Author Database, the Kansas Center for the Book focuses on promoting Kansas authors and books.

Reaching an Important Milestone:
Ceremony Marks Acquisition of '100 Millionth Item'



Madison Council Chairman John Kluge, Mrs. Joseph Carson, donor of the John Rubens Smith Collection, and Dr. Billington during the April 13 ceremony. *Photos by Jim Higgins*

by Helen Dalrymple

During a ceremony held in the Jefferson Building's Great Hall on April 13, the 250th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth, Librarian of Congress James H. Billington announced the Library's acquisition of its "100 millionth item": a collection of 745 watercolor paintings, pencil drawings and prints by John Rubens Smith, a versatile and influential figure in the American art community during the first half of the 19th century.

"These prints and drawings fill a great gap in the Library's collection, providing a unique picture of our young nation," said Dr. Billington. He also noted that "these works especially lend themselves to dissemination through electronic means, the great emerging frontier for the Library, in an age when historians and educators are increasingly turning to pictorial documents for studying and teaching American history."

Purchase of the collection was made possible by funds provided by the Library's private-sector advisory and support group, the James Madison Council, represented at the ceremony by its chairman, John Kluge. In addition, a large portion was donated by the former owner of the collection, Mrs. Joseph Carson of Philadelphia, who was responsible for documenting and preserving the body of work.

Rep. Vic Fazio (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, accepted the gift on behalf of the American people.

"I think it's appropriate that it be not a book or a manuscript or something that might more typically strike the average individual as what is contained in the Library," he said. "But in receiving the John Rubens Smith Collection, we do continue the Library's desire to be a repository for the cultural and intellectual life of the nation in its totality."

Rep. Fazio noted that "Congress, as currently configured, consistently supports the Library in its efforts at being a universal collector . . . a place which people from around the world can look to as the prime repository of knowledge," even though it is not always easy to obtain the necessary funds.

"In that context," he continued, "I want also to express our great appreciation to the Madison Council, to its chairman and to its members, whose . . . time and donations of funds are a great asset to the Library in its efforts to stay current."

Mr. Fazio endorsed the Library's efforts to reach out to Americans across the country in new and innovative ways: "We look to the Library of Congress to lead us in further dissemination of information in an age in which information is changing in format. We know how challenging that role is, but we know that Dr. Billington and his staff consider that one of their prime responsibilities."

A small display of items from the John Rubens Smith Collection and other recent acquisitions, which were selected to illustrate the range of the Library's collections and the many different ways in which they are acquired, was on view in the South Gallery of the Great Hall from April 13 to April 30.

Rep. Richard Gephardt (left) called the Library of Congress "a wonderful resource for the country, for the world and for the Congress"; Sen. Paul Sarbanes said Thomas Jefferson might, if he could see the Library today, have added to his epitaph "Father of the Library of Congress."

Madison Council Meets During Celebration

The Madison Council scheduled a full day of activities centered around the celebration of the Library's 100 millionth acquisition.

Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.), House majority leader, and Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) spoke to the council following a luncheon in the newly refurbished Members' Room of the Jefferson Building about their just-completed trip to Russia in which Dr. Billington participated.

Rep. Gephardt called the Library of Congress "a wonderful resource for the country, for the world and for the Congress," and praised Dr. Billington not only for his leadership of the institution but also for his knowledge of the former Soviet Union.

"I have been on three trips with him," Rep. Gephardt said, "and he is an invaluable personal resource to us in what's happening in the former Soviet Union."

Rep. Lantos also spoke movingly about the congressional delegation's recent visit to Russia and of the time he spent with Elena Bonner, the widow of Nobel Peace Prize winner Andrei Sakharov: "This was in many ways the most depressing and the most exciting visit to Ukraine and Russia that I have ever had."

He said the visit was exciting because of the strong possibility that these countries may adopt a new, democratic and more efficient political system; depressing because the voices of desperation and dictatorship are still there in profusion.

The afternoon business meeting brought Madison Council members up to date on a number of initiatives that the council is supporting; and Dr. Billington and Acting Deputy Librarian Daniel P. Mulhollan reported on the status of legislation affecting the Library that is pending before Congress.

The day concluded with a dinner in the Jefferson Building's Great Hall with members of the Board of Directors of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and other guests. Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative to the United Nations, delivered greetings from President Clinton; Dr. Billington and James Wolfensohn, chairman of the Ken-

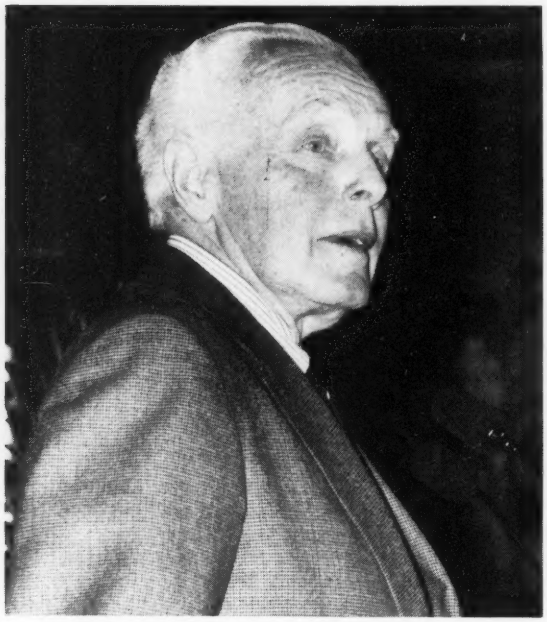
nedy Center, spoke briefly; and Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D-Md.) gave the principal remarks of the evening in honor of Thomas Jefferson and the 250th anniversary of his birth.

The senator's premise was that if Jefferson had an opportunity today to amend the epitaph he wrote for his own tombstone, he might want to add: "Father of the Library of Congress."

Sen. Sarbanes gave four reasons why Jefferson might now see his connection with the Library as one of his proudest accomplishments: "One is the personal attachments that I think Jefferson would have to what the Library of Congress has done, in such simple things as even the naming of the buildings; second is the fact that his own library was, of course, the foundation of this one; third, Jefferson's intense belief in the importance of knowledge and learning; and fourth, Jefferson's republicanism."

—*Helen Dalrymple*

Mrs. Jefferson Patterson (left) of the Madison Council attended, as did Mrs. Jouett Shouse.

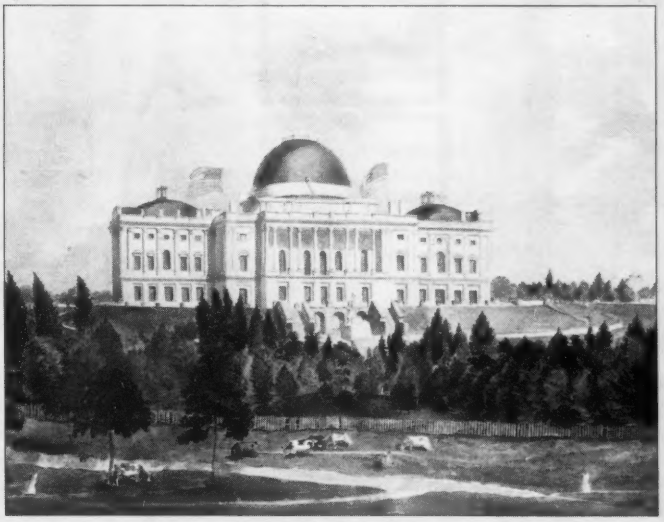


"This was in many ways the most depressing and the most exciting visit to Ukraine and Russia that I have ever had," said Rep. Tom Lantos (left) of his recent trip; James Wolfensohn of the Kennedy Center also delivered remarks.

John Rubens Smith Created Pictorial Record of Early America

Descended from a family of distinguished British artists and engravers, John Rubens Smith first studied art with his father, John Raphael Smith, a renowned English mezzotint engraver, and later at the Royal Academy in London.

Smith emigrated to New York from London about 1807. He first settled in Boston, and later lived and worked in New York and Philadelphia. During his long career in America, Smith created an enduring pictorial record of the young republic and exerted a major influence on American art. Aside from its artistic significance, the importance of this collection stems from the artist's role as witness to the development of the new nation.



Watercolor of U.S. Capitol from John Rubens Smith Collection

From 1809 to 1844, Smith traveled the length of the Eastern seaboard, recording city streets, buildings and monuments, mills and factories, rivers and streams and the people he saw along the way. These drawings, most of which were never published, captured the spirit and energy of the country at a time of enormous growth and optimism. They are among the finest surviving images of urban America in the first half of the 19th century, and they reflect the development of American towns into major cities as well as the transformation of the landscape under the impact of the Industrial Revolution. —*Helen Dalrymple*

LC News Service Available Via FedWorld

The Library of Congress News Service can now be accessed on FedWorld, a new "gateway" service to more than 100 federally managed bulletin boards.

The Library of Congress News Service is No. 60. The number to access FedWorld via a modem-equipped computer is (703) 321-8020. The News Service is also still accessible by directly calling (202) 707-3854 using a modem.

The LC News Service is a new source for information, free of charge, about the Library—its programs, exhibits, activities, hours of operation and job openings.

The News Service will also enable users to get edited versions of stories and announcements from the LC *Information Bulletin* approximately two weeks before they appear in print.

The News Service, will **not,** however, provide access to the Library's bibliographic data bases, nor will other Library services be available through the News Service.

The News Service will offer several menus, including:

☐ LIBRARY—Information of particular interest to librarians, such as availability of Cataloging Distribution Service products, news from Collections Services, new LC publications, changes in LC procedures in cataloging and other areas.

☐ PUBLIC—News for the public such as exhibit openings and features on the Library.

☐ MEDIA— Items of interest to the media, such as news conferences, exhibition openings, and articles that may be reprinted in other publications.

☐ CALENDAR—A calendar of Library events.

☐ ACCESS—Access to the Library. Where to locate entrances, hours of operation.

☐ JOBS—Current openings at the Library of Congress.

☐ FACTS—General information, "Services to the Nation," 25 most-asked questions about the Library of Congress.

☐ CFB—A new menu, with news from the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

Robert Saladini directs the LC Chorale in a concert of the music of Palestrina in the Jefferson Building's Great Hall on April 28. *Photos by Jim Higgins*

LC Chorale Performs Final Palestrina Concert

April 30 marked the end of a special Renaissance celebration in the Library of Congress's Great Hall. Every trace of the memory, majesty and music that has drawn thousands of visitors through the First St. entrance of the Library's Jefferson building since mid-January has disappeared.

On April 30, the Vatican Library exhibition "Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture" closed, as did the Great Hall for further renovation. A few days earlier, on April 28, the Library of Congress Chorale gave the last of 10 concerts celebrating "Rome Reborn" and the music of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, an Italian Renaissance composer who spent much of his career serving the papal court.

The Chorale's director, Robert Saladini, selected the music the performers sang before large crowds in March and April. In addition to the "Sanctus" from the composer's acclaimed *Missa Papae Marcelli* (a portion of the "Sanctus" was on display in the exhibition), the Chorale sang the "Kyrie" from *Missa Regina Coeli*, "Agnus Die" from *Missa Aeterna Christi munera* and motets from *Canticum canticorum*.

The performances, sung *a cappella*, held many visitors spellbound. Marion Jacobs of *The Washington Post* credited Mr. Saladini with "shaping cohesive and powerful four- and six-part harmony" and said of the "Benedictus" from *Missa Papae Marcelli*: "The one-by-one entrance of the four voices builds a shimmering sound tapestry."

The LC Chorale was founded in 1971 by the staff of the Copyright Office as the Copyright Chorale, when the office was located in Northern Virginia. In 1980 the office moved back to Capitol Hill, and the Chorale changed its name and opened its membership to all employees. In 1992 it became an official Library organization.

When asked why the group chose to undertake the Palestrina program, Mr. Saladini explained, "We wanted to expand our repertoire. We do an annual Christmas concert for the Library and some special performances, but we thought it would be wonderful to organize a concert in conjunction with 'Rome Reborn.'

"And the response has been tremendous," he continued. "Li-

brary staffers have described the performances as a 'real morale booster' and we've received many favorable comments from the public. A group of high school students who happened to visit during one of our performances told us the concert was a complete surprise and the best part of their trip to Washington. Another student said that before attending the concert she hadn't decided what to major in when she goes to college, but after the performance, she knew she wanted to study music."

Mr. Saladini thanked several people in the Library for supporting the chorale's project, among them, Carol Armbruster, French/Italian specialist in the European Division, for serving as the chorale's liaison to the Italian Cultural Institute of the Embassy of Italy, which has endorsed and publicized the concerts.

"The Institute's endorsement has given us credibility and brought international attention to the concerts," he said.

On April 7 Ms. Armbruster took Maria Luisa Minio-Paluello, former director of the Italian Cultural Institute, and her successor, Alessandro Vaciago, who is also the embassy's new cultural attaché, on a tour of the Great Hall and the Vatican exhibition. They then met with the chorale shortly before that afternoon's performance. The guests praised the group for their work, and Mr. Vaciago said he looked forward to continued cooperation and collaboration between the Italian Cultural Institute and the Library. Mr. Saladini spent many hours selecting and learning the music before introducing it to the group. A music specialist in the Music Division, he is the director of music at the Church of the Pilgrims in Washington and studied conducting at the Royal School of Church Music in England. He praised the group for putting in 15 hours of rehearsal time in addition to the 10 half-hour performances. "It's a challenge to direct people who are so well versed in music," he said. "They're all musicians, and there are several who could direct the chorale in my place. Many direct or perform with community choruses and church choirs; others play one or more instruments. We're lucky to have so much talent here."

"The members' expertise makes it both a pleasure and a challenge to work with them," Mr. Saladini said.

"Because of the high level of musical training in the group and limited amount of time we can allot to rehearsal, singers are expected to learn most of the music on their own. The bulk of our rehearsal time is spent on developing an appropriate choral tone and on interpreting the music. Palestrina's music is classically understated and elegant, and we attempted to convey the inherent transparent beauty by singing without vibrato and being particularly sensitive to the acoustical challenges of singing in the Great Hall. To achieve the right effect, the singers must repress their musical egos for the good of the group. This is not always easy for some highly trained singers, but we overcame this hurdle early in our rehearsals."

Carol Kilroy, an alto who has sung with the chorale since 1974, described the subtleties of Palestrina's work. "He wrote music to convey the text, not obscure it," she said. "Other Renaissance composers often used more florid notes; the words tended to get lost in the music. But the text was not meant to be treated as an afterthought; it was of primary importance. Other composers of the period tended to lose sight of that and the Church disapproved. In fact, Palestrina was commissioned to clean up some of their works."

Both Ms. Kilroy and Tim Howe, a tenor who has sung with the chorale for two years and works in the Copyright Division, discussed Palestrina's characteristic use of counterpoint (several related but independent melodies sung at once), sustained notes, introductory themes that recur throughout the piece and imitative polyphony in which one set of voices will sing a melodic theme that is echoed, perhaps with variations, by the other singers.

"Some of it may sound strange to the modern ear, but it's beautiful," Mr. Howe said. "The music doesn't

Maria Luisa Minio-Paluello (center) of the Italian Cultural Institute meets with (from left) Robert Saladini, Alessandro Vaciago, Marcella Vaciago, Carol Armbruster and LC Chorale singers Harry Price, Gayle Harris and Julia Huff.

have big ups and downs; it creates a mood, an atmosphere of ethereal beauty that lingers."

"Few singers have the opportunity to perform large blocks of Palestrina," remarked Steven Redhead (tenor), who came to America from Great Britain in 1982 and joined the chorale last fall. Mr. Redhead was a choirboy at Manchester Cathedral and went on to become a choral scholar at Cambridge University.

"Washington, D.C., is an excellent place to sing choral music. There are many excellent amateur singers here who are quite knowledgeable about music, and the Library has more than its fair share of them. Back in England, some of my friends assume that I'm in a musical wasteland, but it's simply not the case. I love being able to stroll down from my office and sing such demanding music with such talented performers. It's better than having a company car!"

But now that the concerts have come to an end, what's next for the chorale? They hope to get bigger, better and even more diverse. "We'd like to recruit more members, although the size of the group has about doubled since last year," said Alice Parrish (soprano), five-year veteran of the chorale and its current president. "And these concerts have certainly generated interest. A congressional staffer who came to a recent concert has asked to join. We welcome current and former Library employees as well as those from other organizations on Capitol Hill.

"As for the future, we're planning to present a program of African-American music next year," she continued. "We want to base that program and many others on the Library's music collections. We'd also like to continue performing concerts that tie in with Library exhibitions."

Other proposals include inviting guest performers to accompany the chorale and perhaps, some day, even take the show on the road.

—Barbara Bryant

The Chroniclers of World War I: *Historian Delivers Schurz Lecture*

Fritz Stern, professor of history at Columbia University, delivered an address on "Historians and the Great War: Private Experience and Public Explication" on April 19 at the Library. Dr. Stern's lecture was the third in the Carl Schurz Lecture Series, which is sponsored each year by the German-American Cultural Fund in cooperation with the Library of Congress.

A prolific author of such books as *The Politics of Cultural Despair* and *The Failure of Illiberalism*, Dr. Stern is currently working on *Genius and the Germans: Einstein, Haber and the Passions of Their Time.*

Fritz Stern, who delivered the Carl Schurz lecture at LC on April 19: Written history "has made and unmade states, has justified aggression and overridden law." *Photo by Jim Higgins*

Dr. Stern discussed many well-known historians' views of World War I and the extent to which they shaped, and were shaped by, this period in history. He began by pointing out that "in our century, and in . . . the Western world, historians have been witness to an age of unprecedented violence. That age began with the calamity of the Great War." He explained that most observers had forgotten the harsh lessons of the American Civil War and the Russo-Japanese War and thus failed to anticipate the fury of the impending conflict. Even military experts believed that, at worst, international rivalries of the early 1900s might result in a "short war."

Throughout his lecture, Dr. Stern explored historians' reactions to World War I. "Could they, so close to it and under the constant pressure of patriotic propaganda, attain a different perspective, muster some kind of historical detachment?" he asked. "Did their experience affect their work; did the war then affect the historians' craft; and did this in turn affect national cultures?"

He described the power many historians have as chroniclers of world events by quoting C.V. Wedgwood, who observed, "History—that is, written history—has made and unmade states, given courage to the oppressed and undermined the oppressor; [it] has justified aggression and overridden law."

In describing the historians who were writing in 1914, he painted a portrait of writers and researchers whose perspective was increasingly "parochial and specialized." Most did not share the forebodings of many artists and writers before 1914 who realized how unstable and dishonest many aspects of society had become. Among German historians, these feelings were accompanied by a "longing for redemption," Dr. Stern said, quoting Herman Hesse. Hesse saluted the "moral values" of war and said, "To be torn out of a dull capitalistic peace was good for many Germans, and it seems to me that a genuine artist would find greater value in a nation of men who have faced death and know the immediacy and freshness of camp life."

Among German soldiers, the military uniform symbolized "patriotic

manliness" and affirmed their belief in discipline and hierarchy. However, Dr. Stern believes that other nations viewed World War I differently. To the French, the war was "a historic duty, once more a defense of *la patrie,*" while British historians were dismayed by the prospect, "apprehensive about its likely horror and uncertain of its justness."

U.S. and British soldiers were not as accustomed to the military outlook and trappings, Dr. Stern argued. "Not that the martial spirit was unknown to them, but they preferred to celebrate it vicariously, as moments of the past." While the German historians championed German culture and militarism, Dr. Stern argued, it was not nationalistic zeal but "fear of a victorious, arrogant Germany that made historians—with doubts and scruples that did them honor—continue to believe in their cause."

One positive aspect of the war was each country's need to bring men of different classes and regions together. Historians fought beside bricklayers, building relationships and gaining insights that would enrich their work thereafter. Many learned from this experience that "virtue, courage, decency were not the property of any class or faith." This experience helped to break down class barriers and myths of superiority based on class.

Like many others, Sir Llewellyn Woodward reflected on the incompetence of the commanders, many of whom were brave and disciplined but inflexible and unimaginative. They suffered, he said, from a lack of "free intelligence" and "mental illiteracy." These observers learned many other lessons as well.

French historian Mark Bloch described the constant propagation of false, secondhand information and censorship designed to manipulate the public.

After the war, few of the Allied historians celebrated, Dr. Stern reported. They realized that although the carnage had ended, many of the underlying reasons for it still existed, but in a changed landscape.

G.M. Trevelyan described the survivors as "no better than a company of antediluvians who have survived the fire-deluge, sitting dazed among the world we knew. . . . The certainty of permanence is gone."

Felix Gilbert echoed this sentiment in his memoirs. "Skeptical about the values of the past, we were also skeptical about the likelihood of stability in the future."

In the aftermath, Dr. Stern explained, German nationalism was clouded with resentment and bitterness, an attitude that did not endear the country to the Allied nations. German academics were largely intolerant and wary of controversy. "Many historians retreated to monographic work, finger exercises of the historical spirit," he said, adding that there were two lessons to be learned: that "national insularity" is costly and argues for "a comparative history transcending that narrow perspective"; and that there is danger in "studying the past in discrete compartments."

However, as a battered Germany lurched toward recovery, the Americans—along with their historians—came into their own. "In the aftermath of the war, American historians became equals in the international community of scholars," Dr. Stern said.

But what followed could not be called an age of enlightenment. America's historians focused on the country's efforts to deal with racial conflicts, a still demoralized South and the effects of the Great Depression. He added, however, "much of post-1918 work was again routine, a return to the cloistered insularity of earlier work," which became "a comfortable shield" blotting out thorny issues such as the rise of Bolshevism and Fascism in the years that followed.

Eventually, some German historians not only tolerated but became "quietly complicitous" with the Nazi regime. Some, like the Austrian historian Srbik "became demonstrably pro-Nazi," Dr. Stern said. As this movement grew, the West became divided over whether to pursue appeasement or opt for rearmament. He credits Mark Bloch for writing a "magnificent reckoning of France's defeat, the rot that flowed from national indifference and poisoned a country. The stupefied incompetence at the top reflected the lassitude, the conflicts, the loss of morale at the bottom."

In closing, Dr. Stern explained that the "disaster" in the early 20th century left the world with an imperative to "explicate the past for the benefit of the present." He warned against the tendency to view the past in such a way as to allow "theory with all its abstractness" to overwhelm "experience in all its recalcitrant complexity."

He pointed to the examples set by Bloch and others: "Historians do have a civic responsibility, and we do live by freedom." —*Barbara Bryant*

CLARIFICATION

A reference to the "reestablishment" of independence for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (LC *Information Bulletin,* Vol. 52, No. 7, page 134) should instead have referred to the *establishment* of independence for the country that calls itself Macedonia, not "reestablishment." The Greek people and government claim that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has no claim to the name and must change it before the European Community can recognize its independence. At the request of Greece, the EC has refused to recognize that republic as an independent country until it changes its name (an action it adamantly opposes) and renounces irredentist claims against Greece.

The territory called Macedonia, which has not been a stable nation-state since the time of Alexander the Great, was carved up among Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia at the end of the Second Balkan War in 1913. The ancient Macedonians were Greeks; today's residents of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are ethnic Slavs, Albanians, et al.

Testimony *(Cont. from p. 196)*
this month in the press is Bridgeport, Conn., where the public library branches are now open only one day a week.

We are in serious danger of eroding a unique legacy laboriously created by our forebears.

No other nation has developed such an array of public libraries, financed largely by local taxes and donations, governed by local citizens and responsive to local community needs.

This did not happen by accident. In 1731, long before the American Revolution, young Benjamin Franklin hit upon the idea of starting a subscription library – the Library Company of Philadelphia. Soon, similar libraries sprang up elsewhere, permitting many Americans of modest means to have access to books and knowledge otherwise available only to the rich.

After the founding of the republic, Thomas Jefferson was a prime mover both in establishing the Library of Congress and in selling to Congress his 6,487-volume personal library after the British burned the Capitol and the original Library of Congress in 1814. Jefferson's was perhaps the best collection of books in North America and it formed the core of the national library we have today.

Wrote James Madison, Jefferson's friend, eventual successor in the White House and supporter of the Library of Congress: "What spectacle can be more edifying or more seasonable than that of Liberty & Learning, each leaning on the other for their mutual and surest support."

This spirit, and a general zest for community improvement, bloomed later everywhere in America. The first urban public library came into being in Boston in 1854; and, after the Civil War, both the profession of librarianship, led by Melvil Dewey, and the construction of libraries developed rapidly.

"Now," said Dewey in 1876, "many of our libraries are as accessible as our post offices." The biggest boost to public libraries came, of course, from Andrew Carnegie at the end of the century. Starting in 1886, he financed the building of 1,679 public libraries across America, each with its distinctive architecture and local governance.

As Carnegie understood, public libraries were of crucial importance to the progress of America. They helped the children of waves of immigrants not just to assimilate but to acquire the new skills needed for advancement. They provided the opportunities for lifelong, self-directed learning and enjoyment and sources of practical information for local professionals and businessmen. Public libraries are still performing these vital functions as we look toward the 21st century.

Yet some pundits now argue that the community library and even the book are doomed to obsolescence. As computers have gone into schools in California, more than half of the state's public school libraries have closed in the past decade. With half of the work force working with computers, it is said that the American citizenry will soon no longer need libraries or books; they will tap into vast organized data banks of digitized materials – text, images, sound – on some variant of the personal computer in their own homes; and will soon be networking from home with the entire world.

And yet there is really no practical, user-friendly substitute for the book. It is simple, compact, affordable and portable: a unique vehicle for rumination and imagination. Moreover, according to *Library Journal*, purchases of books were up last year and public library book circulation increased about 7 percent. The book is not dead. Television supplemented radio but did not kill it; and I believe that electronic on-line information will supplement, not destroy, the book. The electronic age is neither a threat nor a panacea – but a promise that libraries can help to realize.

"The cost of access has prompted many commentators to predict that home use of commercial electronic information services will be restricted to the well-to-do [creating] information 'haves' and 'have-nots.' That is where the public library comes in."

The current stage of the evolving electronic marketplace is one of rapid obsolescence, systems incompatibility, lack of standards, user-unfriendliness, and dazzling applications that may have little practical use. Librarians can and should play a key role in determining what really works for the user.

Americans currently seem interested in using the electronic technology mostly to search out specific bits and chunks of information – from on-line encyclopedias; reference books; airline timetables; census data; compendiums of legal, governmental, commercial, scientific, medical and biographical information; and archives of films, photographs, maps, news reports, journal articles, monographs and other material.

Still in their early forms, such data-retrieving functions have drawn more than 2 million residential users of the most popular current information services – Prodigy and CompuServe – and new services are coming into being every year. Just one of the several electronic on-line versions of the Library of Congress exhibition of once-secret Soviet documents that we made available free of charge last summer drew more than 70,000 users all over the country last year – far more people than saw the exhibition or read the book about it.

Yet it seems to us at the Library of Congress that all of this technological change makes the public library more, rather than less, important to the progress of the United States in the 21st century.

This is partly because of cost. Fully converting existing books and magazines to be put on line is slow and expensive (text alone can cost $2 to $3 per page); royalties must be paid to copyright owners, and there are other costs. Thus, for the foreseeable future, most of the vast existing paper record of the human past seems likely to remain on paper in libraries – preserved, of necessity, by less expensive methods than conversion to electronic formats. It also seems highly likely that, as with the proliferation of cable TV channels, private entrepreneurs will develop material for the home information center on the basis of what sells, and what sells most is entertainment.

As for our nascent "pure" information services – supplying legal and commercial data, news, scientific and technical journal articles – these are likely to remain either too costly or too specialized for the average home consumer, and the multimedia artistic and educational products now being devised may also be too expensive for all but a small percentage of the nation's individual consumers.

The cost of access has prompted many commentators to predict that individual home use of the commercial electronic information services of the future, like the use of books in the early days of print, will be restricted to the well-to-do. Over time, it is said, there could emerge two classes of Americans: information "haves" and information "have-nots."

That is where the public library comes in. The library, properly supported, organized and equipped, cannot only keep the paper record but can also serve as a local distributor for many, if not all, information services, making them available to all comers on library equipment or local area networks for

free or for modest fees, depending on the source and on arrangements with the supplier.

The professional librarian will guide the user to the right source, saving the user time and money. Such operations are already under way in major research libraries and in some public libraries. Widely extended to public libraries, this type of arrangement could create a market for high-quality educational, archival and information services, provide more equitable access and make good use of existing library infrastructure. As electronics begin to perform the function of information distribution more rapidly and efficiently, librarians will increasingly be freed from rote work to become personalized "knowledge navigators" through the oceans of data and material that are swamping everyone in the Information Age. They will be free to help a whole new range of diverse users with special needs—and to preserve and develop customized collections for traditional browsing and synthesis at their own facilities.

Thus, as it considers the electronic future, its costs and the needs of the country, Congress might do well to find new ways to work with what already exists: those "information nodes" in every community represented by the 15,000 public libraries as well as the major libraries in existing centers of research and education throughout the country.

The first waves of the new electronic technology are upon us, with vast economic and social implications. But the technology will supplement, not supplant, the book and make libraries and librarians more, not less, important.

The keys to the future are cooperation, standardization, practicality, flexibility. The National Research and Education Network, still being shaped under federal auspices, should enormously stimulate cooperation and progress in research and creativity. The Internet, a growing nonprofit network of networks linking 20 million people around the globe, is showing some of the possibilities, and many public libraries are already tied in to it.

The Library of Congress is working with other libraries and agencies to explore how best to make its unique resources available via the new technology to the rest of the country, including local libraries. Our current Vatican exhibit, like our past Russian Archives exhibit and our Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition [which runs through Aug. 1], has been put on-line free; and at the end of this month, we expect to put part of our "electronic card catalog," some 32 million records, on-line free via the Internet, and in many public libraries, people will be able to tap into it.

But we are moving beyond sharing just exhibits and bibliographical information toward full-text electronic delivery of our vast collections. Our American Memory experimental project involves the electronic preservation and distribution of some of our key American history collections, such as Civil War photos, African-American pamphlets and early 20th century movies and sound recordings. We are currently testing American Memory in 44 schools and libraries across the country, and we are trying it out on-line with the cooperation of Jones Intercable in Colorado.

The key point about American Memory is that it is interactive—engaging the active mind the way reading does and television does not. We see American Memory as a kind of electronic supplement to libraries—raising questions for a new audiovisual generation that can only be answered by reading. For all the high technology in the world will not bring us progress unless far more of our young people get into the fun of seeking knowledge and seizing the opportunities for creativity and self-advancement that come only with reading.

"The first waves of the new technology are upon us, with vast economic and social implications. But the technology will supplement, not supplant, the book and make libraries and librarians more important. The key to the future is cooperation."

Working with state libraries and other groups, the Library of Congress's Center for the Book, headed by John Cole, has been promoting literacy and reading for more than a decade with meetings, special events, Post Office posters, television announcements and the like. Today, there are 28 state centers for the book, and we are cooperating with 123 national organizations, including Parents Without Partners and the Congress of National Black Churches, to push the message that reading is both fun and profitable.

There are some positive signs. It is no longer so fashionable for young parents to use the television set as a baby-sitter. The sales of children's books are up and so is the use of children's reading rooms in public libraries. Almost three-fourths of all children, aged 3 to 8, visited a public library in the past year. And overall public library circulation was up 15 percent in 1991 over 1990—the latest and largest in a steady series of increases over the last decade.

We cannot wipe out television—which babbles an average of seven hours a day in the average household—but we have some hope that the '90s will see further recovery in reading. Used properly, the new technology can help bring children to books. And the 15,000 public libraries, like the 92,000 remaining school libraries, will be in the front lines of this crucial struggle to erase the national deficit in learning.

It seems to me that the federal government has a key part to play in encouraging the renaissance of learning, which all agree must take place if we are to have a healthy democracy and a competitive economy in the 21st century. Under discussion are a variety of important matters such as national educational standards, federal family policies and the changes in adult behavior needed to give our children a healthier start.

But I believe that the president and Congress should pay special attention to the functions that the 15,000 public libraries perform—as places of inspiration for the young, as local dispensers of information in all formats to business and the professions and as sources of enlightenment about the workings of our democracy for all citizens.

Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Melvil Dewey and Andrew Carnegie had the right idea. Public libraries, linked by new technology to one another, to university libraries and the Library of Congress, can play a vital role in the national research and education network of the future.

America's local public libraries, unglamorous, unpublicized, yet deeply cherished and heavily used in thousands of communities, are our true temples of pluralism, preserving on their shelves all points of view. They also bring communities together by allowing every literate American to participate in the quest for practical knowledge and human understanding that keeps democracy dynamic. Humanism and democracy—like America itself—came into being with the invention of printing and the culture of the book.

All of this will survive and flourish if we can bring ever more of our people into libraries, where the pursuit of truth occurs: the highest form of Jefferson's pursuit of happiness and a pursuit that is entirely noncompetitive and helps keep us from the pursuit of one another.

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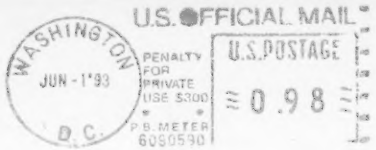

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